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Paraphrase

or

The Story of Valentine
and His Brother



By SUSANNAH DAY

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1900

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



THE STORY
OF
VALENTINE AND HIS BROTHER

BY
MRS. M. O. W. OLIPHANT

PARAPHRASED
BY
SUSANNAH BAY



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THE STORY OF VALENTINE AND
HIS BROTHER.

The sky was wild and stormy, the rain poured down
in sheets,
When a tall, tramping woman strode along the village
streets,
And two crying little children with her stumbled on
behind,
In their feeble, helpless fashion, struggling hard
against the wind.
One of the village gossips, peering out into the
rain,
Stood still in her astonishment. Where is thae child-
ren gaen?
“Woman,” she called, “what ails ye, that ye’re oot
wi’ bairns the day?
Bring them baith in to the fireside; ye hae surely lost
yer way.”
The woman stopped an instant, then she turned a
face of stone.
“Is it far to Jean McFarlane’s?” she asked, in a sort
of moan.

“Jean McFarlane’s! is it? That is no’ a place for you,
Gae ye tae Mr. Malcolm’s—he’s a dacent body—do;
An’ bide ye here a minute till I get the bairns a
‘piece’.”

But the tramper hardly waited for the other’s voice
to cease:

On through the straggling village, over the little
bridge,

And up to a long, low, rambling house, that stood on
a kind of ridge.

“Never an honest gudewife would go to a hoose like
that,”

Said the cottager to herself that night as she sat alone
with her cat.

But it was an honest gudewife, at Jean McFarlane’s
door,

And Jean McFarlane saw it well, with her uncanny
lore.

“Weel! what is’t ye’re wantin’!” she asked with half
a jeer;

And two men at the fire, drinking, looked up with
drunken leer.

“Set ye up! A private room! Eh, sirs, this leddy’s
lost her road.

It’s the ‘Bull’ ye should hae gane to, mem. Just
stop that girnin’ toad;

The brat is cauld and weet, I see, but that's nae
reason why

The haill hoose should be fashed to hear the little
deevil cry."

But a private room was furnished. Jean had guests
of many sorts,

And sometimes those escaping from the notice of the
courts.

Once in the room, the woman put her boys upon the
bed,

Where each fell asleep the minute he laid down his
curly head.

But the mother's face was eloquent with agony and
fears,

Like one who saw no hope for her through all the
coming years.

She looked like one who, dying, leaves his dearest
upon earth;

More, here below must parted be from all that makes
life worth;

And round and round the room she went, as if her
thoughts were wild,

As if she were compelled to make a choice of either
child.

One little thing had thrown his shoe off down upon
the floor;

The other, wearing both, was sleeping nearest to the
door;

That sealed his fate. His mother drew him gently to
her knee,

Wrapped her shawl about him with a care 'twas
pitiful to see,

And, hurrying through the passages with footsteps
swift and light,

With that one child within her arms, went out into
the night.

The storm that raged the hamlet through raged
fiercer on the hill,

Tearing the branches, pouring rain, and scattering
leaves at will;

All through the park the tempest swept, and madly
showed its power,

Where a Lord Eskside always dwelt since one had
held the tower.

There, in the darkening drawing-room, sat, listening
to the rain,

Lady Eskside and a friend who after years had come
again.

The dismal day was closing in, and long had neither
spoke,

When, with what seemed an effort, Lady Eskside
silence broke:

“As I have told you, Mary, ’tis a constant trial to me—

And his father—that my Richard spends his years in Italy.

’Tis all that wretched marriage, dear, although his post alone,

Without his claims here, at his age, he might be proud to own.

You know the story of his life?” “I’ve heard it,” Mary said;

“But it is now so long ago”—and Mary bent her head.

“He married just a roadside tramp, a girl without a home,

A farmer’s, shepherd’s, laborer’s child of better race is come;

But there’s a thing of which perhaps I should not speak to you,

My Richard married her, thank God, which all men might not do.

He married her, and when there was no mending—all was gone—

He wrote to me, to come to him and see what could be done!

I was appalled—nor more, nor less; it wrung my very soul,

That ever child of mine should have so little self-control.

Of course I went—they were in France—I might as well have stayed,

You know yourself of such a woman nothing could be made.

He had her taught; they travelled far; but my opinion is

It did not much affect her, and I fancy it is his."

"But, Lady Eskside," Mary said, "training like that from him

Would change most women." Mary's thoughts were in a distance dim.

"I perceived little, and I watched her progress anxiously;

I went there when the twins were born; there was no change to me;

And then there came a change, indeed—the creature ran away,

Taking the children. Where they are, we do not know this day.

All the detective service could do for us was in vain,

Richard went to America, and he came back again."

At this the bell at the great door rang loud and fierce
and long,

A moment more, the door itself banged like a Chinese
gong.

Some time elapsed; the butler came, reluctantly and
slow.

“What is the matter, Harding?” “My Lady, I don’t
know:

They thrust a child right in my face, I had to take
him in,

Then slammed the door; you did not hear, the storm
made such a din.”

“Praise God!” said Lady Eskside, “He has heard
and answered me.

Come, Mary, we know what it is, but we will go and
see.”

The servants stood about the child, who, backing
’gainst the wall,

And, terrified, had squared his fists and seemed to
brave them all.

“Who are you?” Lady Eskside said. The child
looked up amazed,

Dropped his small arms, and at her face with a child
wonder gazed.

"I'm Val," he said, "and I aint come for nothing
that is wrong;

My mammy has gone back for Dick; she won't be
very long.

Dick's asleep; mammy put me here 'cause it's so wet
outside,

I was too heavy, don't you see, to carry Dick
beside."

"Mary! you hear him! 'Dick' and 'Val'—these are
the names I know.

Oh, Mary! God has answered me—I knew it would
be so.

My baby, come, and we will wait for mammy by the
fire,"

And to her breast she clasped the child, all stained
with rain and mire.

And Lady Eskside waited for the mother all that
night;

But Mary thought, "She'll never come." Mary was
in the right.

The Honorable Richard Ross, Her Majesty's En-
voy,

Was sent for now to claim his son and wish his
mother joy.

He came, a man at thirty-two, of elegance and ease,

The last in all the world, you'd say, a low-born woman could please.

"I'll own him, mother," Richard said. "My judgment quite concurs

In what you've done; none knowing her could doubt that this was hers."

"Ah! Richard, it is you he's like," the mother said in pain;

And the man, with his indifferent air, called the child back again.

"Is this like me? and this? and this?" touching Val's brow and hair.

Now the mother had been very dark and the father very fair.

Valentine grew, as children do, and Val was sent to school,

A kindlier, stronger, handsomer lad than lads are as a rule.

All his reports were fairly good; Lord Eskside felt repaid,

And Lady Eskside shed some tears when those reports were made,

For in their minds lay double fear, checked ere 'twas
well begun:

Val's father had done foolishly, Val was his mother's
son.

But fortune still seems favoring them, and blessings
intertwine,

For Richard said the elder of the twins was Valentine.
After a year Val's tutor wrote, "with much regret,"
to send

The news that "Valentine had found a most improper
friend,"

A youth employed about the boats, much liked by
Eton men;

But Val had carried things too far, and reprimands
were vain.

The tutor's letter showed such ire, Val wrote in such
distress,

Lord Eskside moved a compromise: "Let intercourse
be less."

Long after, when at Oxford, where Val went for his
degree,

In a letter to his grandmother this postscript added he:
"And, grandmamma, there's something I must not
forget to tell,

Brown, the young boatbuilder is here, and he does
very well."

But even years at Oxford come to an end at
last,

The man must now begin his life, boyhood and youth
all past.

Val made the usual tour abroad, and lastly went to
see

His father, still diplomatist in sunny Italy.

If Richard was not all delight to have a son full
grown

To introduce in that gay world where he so brilliant
shone,

Still he was glad to see the boy, and proud, too, in
in his way,

While Valentine grew quite elate to find his father's
sway.

And as the two together talked of what to both was
dear,

The feeling and affection grew—natural in those so
near.

One evening, in discussing some political event,

Val said Lord Eskside's hopes for him all turned to
Parliament.

"To Parliament!" said Richard, and he spoke in
high disdain;

"I really wish my father would not bring that up
again;

It is the most absurd idea." "I wish, sir," Val replied,

"You'd remember — that — my grandfather's — my grandfather," he cried.

Richard Ross smiled. "Ah! yes," he said, "but he is not that to me;

He's my father only; that makes all the difference, you see."

And then with generalities the man assuaged the boy: It was a thing which possibly might cause them much annoy,

All that a man has ever done—or that his foes invent— Is brought up at the hustings with the most malign intent.

"But I have not done anything," cried Valentine in haste;

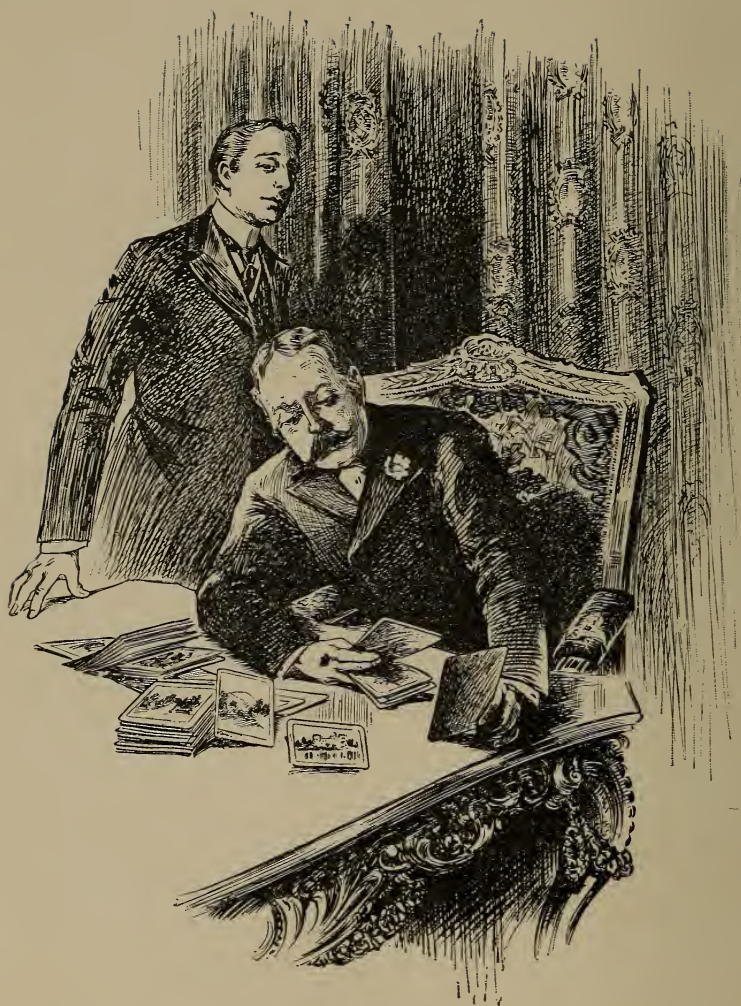
"Not anything in all my life that I should be disgraced."

"Your life is short," his father said, "and there perhaps may be

Those older and more widely known to draw the enemy.

And now, Val, let me see your views—the pictures of your friends,

Oxford for me has all the soft enchantment distance lends."



And Val, delighted, brought them to a hanging lamp
in reach,

And to his father's suave inquiries gave his history of
each.

"What's this?" asked Richard suddenly, and very
gravely too.

"Oh, nothing; it's our boathouse; 'tis, I know, a
stupid view,

It ought not to be in with those—it slipped in out of
place"—

"Pardon" (and Richard held it back), "this is a
striking face."

"That's Dick Brown's mother; she's taken there by
accident, I think,

When I row on the river she is always at the brink.

You call her face a striking one: it looks so as I pass,

And she is very handsome too, of course in her own
class.

Dick's got on like a house a-fire—you never saw such
luck;

No doubt it is his industry, and I should say his
pluck;

He's head man at that boatbuilder's, he's everyone's
good word,"

And Val himself showed feeling, as if his soul were
stirred.

“Don’t you remember what a row old Morgan made
at home,
That I was in low company and grandpapa must come?
He prophesied I’d get to grief, that you’d be so averse;
It’s true, I must have other friends, but, sir, I might
have worse.”

That night, when Valentine retired to the young
man’s joyous rest,
His father did not seek his own with any special zest.
Over and over he recalls the many bitter things
Which from his strange and burdened life fond recol-
lection brings.
“Maladetta!” said this husband between his clenched
teeth,
“It is for you I’m driven as the whirlwind drives the
leaf.
That is my wife.” It roused him past diplomacy and
pelf.
If Valentine was like her, she was still more like
herself.
It was an awful thing, and strange, that Richard in
his heart
Should hold his wife responsible for her so passive
part;

The flower that growing 'neath the hedge is plucked
and thrown aside,

If less conscious, no more passive, than was Richard
Ross's bride.

Her flight he did not now regret—he was in measure
free;

It was his marriage he bemoaned, fiercely and bit-
terly.

But Val went back to Scotland, and Richard day by
day

Pursued his avocations in his finished, thorough
way;

And it was some time after Val's Italian visits date,
He wrote his father he'd become the Tory candidate.
When Richard read these lines he said, "Since this
is all begun,

Nothing's left one but to wait for what must come
before 'tis done.

Val's canvassing went on with great success,
Lord Eskside's strength and skill,
His insight, his experience, caution, will,
Were all employed; while Valentine—made a
good candidate's address.

Still there was much to fear. Val, young,
untried,
With neither strength nor skill,
With but youth's insight and a young man's
will:
'Twas on high Tory principle, in truth, their
hopes relied.

Three mornings ere the balloting, when Harding
came downstairs
To take the chair and read the news, as he said, "un-
awares,"
Suddenly he became as white as if he felt a
blow.
What was it that was set down there? Who to it
could say no?
'Twas but the tale of Valentine Ross, with some ill-
nature told:
A tramper brat—a stormy night—a woman wisely
bold—
Two fond old people take the child, adopted from
that day,
While his reputed father most astutely keeps away.

"And now, friends and electors, it needs not to remind you

That this is not at all the sort of candidate to bind you.

Lord Eskside and Sir Philip Spence are those of whom we're proud,

And they perhaps might have our votes if principle allowed;

But a boy without a birthplace!—a stripling without name!

The county cannot think of it without a sense of shame."

As Lord Eskside read this paper his heavy eyebrows worked,

But no sign of fear or flinching in the eyes beneath them lurked;

"When Lady Eskside's here," he said, "ask her to come to me,"

Then he went in and shut the door of the great library.

This came from Alexander Pringle, barrister-at-law,

The next of kin in case Val's rights should prove to have a flaw,

And, what made it more dastardly, with children of
his own,
Val's playmates and companions until all were fully
grown.

At length the dreaded day had come when Valentine
must be,
Not tried for life, but next to it — tried for his
pedigree.

The village swarmed, and every road was thorough-
fare that day,

Such was the nature of the fight no soul could keep
away.

Lady Eskside at the window of the "Bull" must do
her part,

Smiling, with her friends around her, although with
a bursting heart;

While the Liberal ladies opposite have mustered in
great force,

And their leader's wife appears to feel insured against
all loss.

And naturally she feels so; from the time that they
begin,

The Tory votes rise slowly, while the Liberal votes
pour in,



And every point that made for Val had been so
wisely gained,

That now at Pringle's telling blow no last resource
remained.

Yet many an honest Liberal felt that they never had
A victory as dearly won, with less to make them
glad;

And every voter knew the earl believed in his own
claim,

A man an honor in himself to family and name.

Still all those drifting currents, caught by each wind
as it blows,

Were taken by this Liberal gale to swell the Tory
foes.

And now comes through the parting crowd a phaeton
and pair,

The lady driving, standing up, a woman tall and
fair;

Straight to the "Bull" she wends her way through
the long street of the town,

She has Val's ribbons on her whip and on her hat
and gown.

This lady is the daughter of a well-known Liberal
sire,

Who may himself perhaps one day to Parliament
aspire;

And now to find these Tory colors valiantly displayed,

Both high and low are wondering why such a change is made.

"Good morning, Lady Eskside," she cries; "we vote with you;

We're Liberal, but we like fair play, and we shall have it too."

There was a pause, then cheer on cheer rose from that varying throng.

Liberal votes fell—the tide was turned—Valentine Ross had won.

The new-elected member with his friends and train retire,

Lord Eskside as he always was, Val with his face on fire;

And as the people make a lane for these grandees to pass,

Some one around upon the left hurries across the grass:

'Tis Alexander Pringle Junior, just from foreign tour;

Where Val went, there the Pringles went, of that you may be sure.

But Sandy, just returned, has not heard what his
father wrote,
He only knows the friend has won for whom he
meant to vote;
His hand outstretched, his eager face with youth and
pleasure shown,
He came to Val, who instantly—turned round and
knocked him down.

This was disgrace. As Lord and Lady Eskside
talked it o'er,
It seemed but fitting consequence of all that went
before.
Alas! they did not yet know all of that eventful day:
Val was his mother's son, and Val—had run away.

From his Italian palace, Lord Eskside's absent son
Was watching in solicitude he had not cared to
own.
But, from the time the English papers told of Val's
success,
His letters stopped, no line from home of detail, more
or less.

At last a telegram arrived with these words, none beside:

“Is Valentine with you?” It was signed “Catherine Eskside.”

“Is Valentine with you?” thought Richard; “that means Val is gone,

The whole sad story has come out, and it cannot be borne;

I must get there,” but Richard halted at that weird old town,

Where his boys first saw light, and had the record copied down.

“Oh, my dear, where is Valentine?” poor Lady Eskside said.

“Your father is in London, but I’m sometimes sure Val’s dead.”

“No, mother; there’s that in his blood, I think should calm your fears;

He has but followed a wild will, like one in other years.”

Of Richard Ross’s own “wild will” he seemed not to have thought:

Val was not second, but the third, who misery had brought.

“And, Richard, you will go at once, and bring him back, my dear;

Your father said but little, but he might have been severe."

"Yes, mother, I will go at once, but not, I think, to-day,

Valentine is no boy, that this will not admit delay."

Richard perhaps had hardly felt that agony of pride,

At hearing of the knocking down, it cost to Lord Eskside;

But sometimes the idea that Val had turned like her who bore him,

Would aggravate his father so, he cared not to restore him.

Yet two days saw this member of the Diplomatic Corps,

His valet, and his luggage, in the railway train once more;

The train for Oxford, though he told no one where he was bound,

Nor even had his ticket bought 'till off of Scottish ground.

"I think Valentine," said Richard, "in his present state of mind

Would go to Oxford, and perhaps leave an address behind."

Arrived in Oxford's classic precincts just as the sun
had set,

Richard soon found the little house Dick worked so
hard to get.

He waited—knocked—there stood his wife, and
Richard's heart stopped still.

"Is Valentine with you?" Yes, sir; but he is very
ill."

"How long since he was taken ill? Have you
advice?" he asked.

"I have the best that could be had; they say the
worst is past."

"Myra, you know me?" "Yes, sir,——" "And is
this after all—"

"Oh, sir," the mother only in her face, "I heard him
call."

She left him like a flash,—he was a half-forgotten
shade,

Her soul, her life, all with the child, where cares and
prayers were laid.

Richard Ross saw this perfectly; he stood a moment
there,

And then—what else was there to do?—went up the
little stair.

In the dim light lay Valentine, tossing his fevered
head,

Unconscious of those figures strange on either side
his bed.

Poor Val had gone to Oxford without any grave
design:

Sick, disgraced, he cared not where he went, nor
what he did, in fine:

Rowing idly on the river, let his outrigger capsize,
Not having seen his mother, yet before her very eyes.
She saw him in the water, she perceived he did not
swim,

Val was weak with coming illness, lassitude in every
limb;

Seizing a boat that floated near, her strong arm took
the oar,

And in a moment Val and Myra were upon the shore.

The mistress sat alone that day within the Eskside
towers,

While sadness and anxiety but slowly marked the
hours:

The painful present in her mind, the past with all it
bore;

She raised her weary eyes and saw Harding was
at the door.

“My Lady, there’s a man—I mean a gentleman—
below,
I put him in the dining room—I really did not
know—”

Down the great staircase Lady Eskside went, almost
with speed,

But when she saw her visitor she trembled like a reed.

“Boy, boy, who are you? Oh! who are you?” with
a piteous cry.

“My Lady, no one but Dick Brown,” he, wondering,
made reply.

“I come from Mr. Valentine Ross, who’s better now
and will

Improve,” (Dick dreaded fresh alarm); “but he is
very ill.”

“Where is he? Who is with him?” Her gray eye on
him bends.

“He is at my place, my lady; I thought I should
tell his friends.

“Where is your mother? Who is she?—though very
well I know.

My boy, the night train comes at eight, and you and
I will go.”

Here was a proposition! Poor Myra had perforce,
In spite of her heart’s wild dismay, sent word of Mr.
Ross;

"Dick, never speak of me," she said, in manifest affright.

"If they ask you, do not answer, and come back that very night."

Dick had set forth most willingly, yet puzzled, sad, and tried,

Crossing that other traveller's path who came south from Eskside.

Dick's was a generous soul, but yet sometimes his eyes grew dim:

Since Mr. Ross had come his mother scarcely thought of him.

That she was always right this loyal son could take for granted,

But yet she was his all, and it was hard to be supplanted.

Had Dick stood where his father stood within that very hour,

And heard his mother's pleadings that Dick might be left with her,

He would have felt their love at least unchanged on either side,

And worse men than Dick Brown had been entirely satisfied.

There was a mystery somewhere: Dick, familiar with that class

Where many things avoid the light, strove hard to let
it pass;
But now this strange old lady, though half lunatic,
no doubt,
Yet clearly knew the story too. Dick could not
make it out.

The lady, maid, and the young man calling himself
Dick Brown,
Reaching Lord Eskside's London inn, were then and
there set down.
By telegram had Lady Eskside told of Valentine,
But naturally no farther word of all she could
divine.
Yet, bringing Dick to Lord Eskside, she felt in very
truth,
He could not miss Dick's likeness to Richard in his
youth.
The earl, excited in his way, was in no mood to scan
A person like Dick, and but saw a well-made working
man.
"I think," he said, "it will be well that you sit
in the hall,
Where, when her ladyship must go, you'll hear me as
I call."

“Go, my dear,” Lady Eskside said, “you’ll be a comfort yet

To those who seem entirely blind and everything forget.”

“I don’t know what my lady means,” the earl spoke with some state;

“It may be at the station that you had better wait.”

Dick was a man of too much sense and too much strength of mind

To think Lord Eskside meant to be, or that he was, unkind;

He would have said he liked this best, yet Lady Eskside’s petting

Had made, it may be—Dick was young—a change of tone upsetting.

So these three, none of them well pleased, including young Dick Brown,

Embarked together on the train for famous Oxford town.

Arrived there, and when near his house, young Dick went on before,

To go around it to the rear and open the front door.

As he vanished, Richard Ross himself came down the little path.

Richard has known this always, thought his mother, dumb with wrath,

But he had not known it always: he had wondrous things to tell,

And, best of all the blessèd tidings, Val was doing well.

Dick, hastening through the passage, found the door was left ajar,

While, quite at home, upon his steps three people talking are.

This was too much: his mother changed, he treated like a toy,

A man through all his struggling life, respected from a boy;

And now they take his house, nor know, nor care that he is there,

Yet, since it was for Mr. Ross, he'd gladly all this bear.

"I'll go to work," thought Dick, "and stay where fine folks cannot come,"

And for the first time turned his back on mother and on home.

Richard meanwhile was telling Val was better, all was theirs,

And with most grateful, reverent hearts, these culprits went up stairs.

Myra stood at Val's door, her head was bent, her eyes downcast;

“God bless you, my dear,” said Lord Eskside to her
as he passed.

Val was better, and he knew them, in the sick man’s
passive way,

Fond and smiling, scarcely realizing they were not
there yesterday.

The old earl stood beside the bed and saw his
darling’s face;

He watched the nurse and mother in her half savage
grace;

He waited in the little parlor for the doctor’s call,

And then he said, “I’ll not sit longer staring at this
wall;

I’ll find that fellow Dick, and see what can be made
of him;

He took French leave this morning.” The earl’s
smile was rather grim.

Dick was a fellow whom it was not difficult to find,
Styles’s head man stood out in every undergraduate
mind.

These were the busy, closing hours of the busy boat-
house day;

Lord Eskside stood where he could see, yet keep out
of Dick’s way.

'Twas, "Brown, come here." "Dick, where are
you? something's wrong with these oars."

The undergraduates filled the place and thronged its
many doors.

"Dick, what are you so long for there? What ails
you? Don't you see

I'm waiting?" "Brown, I called you first; leave that
and come to me."

He's like my father, thought the earl, as Dick moved
to and fro,

Steady, though hurried, competent to what he had
to do;

But very soon Lord Eskside's low voice said,
"Enough of this,"

And Brown was marched away from them, an earl's
arm linked in his.

Through the long days that followed, Myra's voice
was never heard

But in answer to some question, except once, when
this occurred:

She said it rather suddenly and in her simple
way,

Without the most remote idea of what it was to
say,

"You all think Val the eldest;" she shook her handsome head;

"It is Dick who is the eldest, and not Val," the mother said.

Nor Val nor Dick were present, the others all were there;

It seemed as if a gun had burst upon the startled air,

When Richard, with the calm command which he at times could show,

Said this must not be mentioned, that his sons must never know.

Lord Eskside thought if this were well, he could not quite see how;

He hated subterfuge, and then—suppose Dick knew it now!

But Val recovered, they go north, to live as best they can,

The lady with the roadside tramp, Richard with Styles's head man.

And were they happy? Yes—perhaps—all save the one poor soul,

Who, tool of her own ignorance, had madly wrecked the whole;

To live housed with Dick at Oxford had cost effort
no one knew,

But here to meet the forms of life was more than she
could do;

A prison were the pictured walls, the curtains choked
her breath,

She panted like a captured thing, with no escape but
death.

Dick and she ranged the park for hours, Dick
anxious, under strain,

And now the passion of her soul all turned to Dick
again.

One day a bed of primroses had sweetened all the
air:

"Ah! Dick," she said, "how I should like to sell
them here and there."

Coming next morning to her rooms, Dick found his
mother gone,

There was no cause for fear, and yet he felt himself
alone;

"She has but gone to get those flowers; I must not
be so weak;"

Yet he called Val to come with him. They had not
far to seek.

The breeze around blew fresh and free, the blue sky
overhead,

And there—among the primroses—they found her
lying—dead.

To Dick had come a loss supreme; the whole world
was to him
Enshrouded, and to those so young the heavens are
sometimes dim.
And Val too sorrowed; volumes could not tell so
well the worth
Of those who reared him, as that Val mourned her
who brought him forth.
But Val had something on his mind which softened
every mood,
The question now became for him to have it under-
stood.
The five were in the gloaming, and Richard's mind
had flown
To the Embassy and Italy, where he would soon be
gone,
When Val began to speak, and paused, spoke, and
then paused again.
“What's coming now?” his father thought. Val
tried once more, and then
Announced, before his panic-stricken elders could
cry “Quarter,”

The wish, of all things in this world, to wed old
Pringle's daughter!

It seemed to Richard Ross as if his trials would never
cease,

As if perverse fate never could allow him a release.

Anger blazed in Lord Eskside's eyes: "What is it
you tell me?

Marry a daughter of the man we know Pringle
to be!"

"But, grandpapa," said Val, "he failed—and all he
meant to do

We feared he might succeed in only—because what
he said was true."

"True!" said his father; "I must hope that cannot
be made clear;

His letter calls you 'nameless,' says a stranger
brought you here:

Your logic is affected by your interest in your friend,
For she who brought you was my wife; there let the
matter end."

This marriage I'll not brook, thought Richard; my
unhappy past,

Pringle's behavior, love or force must win the day at
last.

And never in his skilful life did Richard Ross com-
bine

The brilliant powers he used so well, as now with
Valentine.

But Richard's skill, Lord Eskside's sense, all they
could urge or say,

With Lady Eskside's soft appeals, were simply thrown
away.

Val's answers all came back to this: "'Twas what he
wished to do,

And, had they loved him, he was sure that they
would wish it too."

He did not seem to listen to the arguments they
brought,

He was but the spoiled child again, without a care or
thought,

Until the trained diplomatist, the man of self-
control,

Lost his patience and his temper, and told the boy
the whole.

"An inexperienced thoughtlessness has just led you
to say

Lord Eskside's grandson, my first son, may follow
his own way;

Absurd as that position is, it is not yours to
take,

Your brother is the elder-born, we've made a grave
mistake;

To reconstruct your plan of life, and see where
your course lies,

At present is enough for you without encumbering
ties."

An instant Val's cheek blanched, his young lip
quivered in distress,

Then, "Sir," he answered, "all my acts will matter
so much less."

"Stop!" cried Dick hoarsely; "do you think I ever
will or can

Take rights that are for Valentine in sight of God
and man?

Who made me what I am, poor as that is, but he?

Who found me?—helped me?—raised me from my
outcast tramp degree?"

"I think, Dick, you are bound," said Richard, "by
the laws, you'll find."

"I beg your pardon, sir; I'm bound by nothing of
the kind."

"My boy," Lord Eskside said, "the question here is
is not for you

Nor me to settle; generations must be kept in view."

"That does not touch me, sir," cried Dick; "if
there's no other way

I'll leave the country—go where none can trace me;
there I'll stay."

“It is not in you,” Richard said. “You don’t know what’s in me;

You did not know *her*—may God bless her; I’m a man and free.

Father and grandfather—I’ve never called you so before—

Don’t make me an exile—wanderer—drive me from your door.

I know what that life is, I’ve learned the pleasures of a home,

I want to live with the old folks through all the years to come.”

“Dick,” said Lord Eskside, “we’ll admit you have made out your cause;

‘Live with the old folks’” (the earl laughed), “we will not fear the laws.”

“Training,” said Richard, “preparation, are with Valentine;

Not to disparage you, my boy, the error has been mine.”

It was decided: Valentine, as Valentine of yore,
Had married Violet Pringle before many months
were o’er.

Jan - 17 1901

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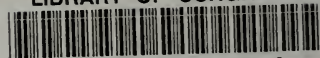
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